

March-April 2003
Volume 6, Issue 2

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Jerry Rouillard, Director
Department of Museums
101 Maple St.,
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 889-6500
jrouilla@placer.ca.gov

George Lay, President
Placer County Historical Society
P.O. Box 5643
Auburn, CA 95604
www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Editor and Staff Writer:
Alycia Alvarez
(530) 889-7705
aalvarez@placer.ca.gov
www.placer.ca.gov/museum

The Placer

A Voice of History

Director's Notes

Jerry Rouillard

Volunteers Keep History Alive

Nowhere are volunteers more important than they are in the ongoing effort to preserve and interpret local history. Healthcare, law enforcement and recreation programs make good use of volunteer resources, but the care and keeping of local history absolutely depends on knowledgeable and dedicated volunteers taking responsibility for the multitude of tasks that keep local history alive.

Our small Department of Museums illustrates the critical importance of volunteers. With just seven full-time and three part-time staff positions, we have responsibility for operating six museums, the County Archives, a Collections Management Facility, an exhibit preparation shop and educational programs for children and adults. Additionally, we provide curatorial care for 100,000 artifacts and over 30,000 historical documents.

Without volunteers, the magnitude of these responsibilities would quickly overwhelm our professional staff.

Volunteer docents staff our six museums and provide the heritage education services highlighted in our Mission Statement. Archives volunteers process historical records, conduct research and provide reference services for other researchers. Collections volunteers help preserve, organize and inventory historic artifacts. Other volunteers help with exhibit preparation, publicity, hospitality services, clerical assistance and special events.

And, of course, we are not the only historical organization dependent of volunteers. Every museum and historical society in Placer County relies heavily on volunteer help, as do virtually all local history organizations throughout the United States.

Since volunteers really are the lifeblood of local history, the effectiveness of volunteer programs directly affects the preservation and presentation of local history. Not only do we need to continually recruit new volunteers, but also give them the training and skills necessary to help us tell the stories that make our communities unique; to provide the character

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Volunteers

VOLUNTEERS – THE AUTHENTIC VIP

Melanie Barton

No one is more important to the on-going operation and success of the Department of Museums than the volunteers. They are definitely **Very Important People** (VIP's). With 100 volunteers contributing over 9,600 hours annually, we rely heavily on their dedication and commitment. Our challenge is to make the volunteer experience as rich and rewarding as possible so that we keep the volunteers we have and attract quality new people interested in volunteering.

To achieve this goal, we are focusing on training and appreciation. As announced in the last issue of *The Placer*, Volunteer/Docent Training is in progress. These classes are the foundation on which volunteers can build. They provide trainees with the historical information and interpretive skills needed to start their volunteer careers. Additional classes are planned for docents so that they can continue to add to that foundation. We anticipate offering classes on period clothing, research techniques, and theme development.

The annual Community Classes series, open to everyone, is another source of continuing

education. These entertaining and interactive classes focus on the rich heritage of Placer County. In addition to the Community Classes series, this summer we plan to host monthly activities that will link Placer County history to modern families. These programs will include a docent lead hike to the bars of the American River exploring gold rush sites and a picnic basket dinner on the lawn of the Bernhard Museum Complex enjoying period music.



We show our appreciation for our volunteers by acknowledging their achievements. A simple thank you for a job well done, a thank

you note, or a phone call are ways to let them know that they do make a difference. On a grander scale, an annual Volunteer Appreciation Day Picnic will be held in April. All volunteers and families will be invited. This special event will celebrate the achievements of all the volunteers and will also offer the professional staff the opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of individuals. Another museum sponsored volunteer appreciation event is the annual trip to a historic destination for those people who have volunteered regularly during the year. In addition to museum sponsored events, the Docent Guild

sponsors trips and activities for their members.

We can never say thank you enough times or always provide enough recognition, but we will continue to strive to let all our volunteers know that we truly appreciate their contributions. I'm reminded of the television game show, *What's My Line*, where the host asks; "Will the real 'Mr. John Doe' please stand up?" If I were to ask this reading audience, "Will the real VIP's please stand up?" I hope that all Museums Department volunteers stand tall. Each and every one of you is an **Authentic VIP!** ♣

Director's Notes Continued from Page 1:

and context that add color and depth to everyday life.

This issue of *The Placer*, focuses on ways that the Museums Department is working to make the volunteer experience richer and more rewarding. We are providing an increasing variety of classes, field trips, and other opportunities for volunteers to add to their understanding and enjoyment of local history. We hope many of you in the Placer County historical community will take advantage of these resources, and we also hope you will help us recruit others into our volunteer programs. All of us have friends or family members who might appreciate the chance to get involved. Sometimes, all it takes is an invitation. ♦



Workshops for Volunteers

Placer County Genealogical Society Offers Stimulating Workshops

Joyce House

The Placer County Genealogical Society has a Day Study Group workshop on the first Tuesday of the month 10 a.m. to Noon except July, August and December. This workshop is an informal round table discussion for genealogical problem solving. Currently the February, March and April workshops consist of a Beginning Genealogy course.

On the fourth Thursday of the month from 7 to 9 p.m. except December, the Placer County Genealogical Society has a general meeting and program. Generally, the program consists of a speaker who talks on subjects of genealogical interest. Our upcoming programs are: February "Castle Hopping in the U.K.;" March "Genealogy of German Speaking Countries," and April "Copy and Restoration in the Digital Age and Traditional."

The above meetings are held in the Beecher Room of the Auburn-Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn.

All meetings are open to the public. For additional information about the society or upcoming meetings call 530-887-2646. ♥



Classes and Lecture Hosted by Maidu Interpretive Center

Chuck Kritzon

- **Soapstone Carving for Adults**

Saturday, March 15, 10am-Noon, join Linda D. at the Maidu Interpretive Center in Roseville to learn the ancient art of carving soapstone. Learn to rasp and smooth this beautiful, natural, material as you sculpt an animal or other shape of your own creation. Soapstone is a locally occurring, silky smooth material that has been used by Maidu Indian People to create practical and ceremonial objects for thousands of years.

Class#: 11442

Fee: \$11 – **pre-registration required.** Ages 18+

- **Hunt a Mammoth!**

Saturday, April 12, 2003 from 10am-3pm, join *old ways* specialist, Chuck Kritzon at the Maidu Interpretive Center in Roseville to learn how to "hunt a mammoth." Ancient hunters used a spear thrower or *atlatl* to hunt

the mighty mammoth. Make and decorate an atlatl and dart (spear), using stone tools, wood, arrowheads, feathers, sinew and earth pigments. Then practice how to throw..

Chuck Kritzon has been learning and teaching old ways classes and pre-historic skills for over ten years.

Class#: 11412

Fee: \$31. Ages 10 and up.

Advance registration required.

- **Lecture – Rock Art of the American Southwest**

Friday, March 14, 7– 8 pm, staff member Chuck Kritzon will present a lecture about the rock art and Native Cultures of the American Southwest at the Maidu Interpretive Center in Roseville. Learn about the materials, techniques and meanings of this ancient art and the cultures. Watch as Chuck turns lumps of colored earth into silky smooth pigment and makes brushes out of locally available plant materials.

Fee: \$5/person. Drop-ins

Welcome, Free for Annual Passholders.

All classes and lectures are held at the Maidu Interpretive Center (Maidu Indian Museum and Nature Learning Center) 1960 Johnson Ranch Drive, Roseville, CA 95661

For more information and registration, call **the Maidu Interpretive Center at (916) 772-4242. ♠**

Placer County Historical Organization News

Placer County Historical Society's President's Message

George Lay

Voluntarism as defined by Webster, "the principle or system of doing something by or relying on voluntary action," describes the backbone of our society. Along with the officers and directors, are the committee chairpersons and their members who give countless hours of their time.

- Addah Owens, our Vice President, is also in charge of all programs for the dinner meetings. She lines up the speakers and decorates the tables, each time, with a theme in conjunction with the topic.
- Betty Samson is responsible for all the dinner reservations, which usually are over 100. Betty also chairs the very important Oral History committee.
- Barbara Burdick is in charge of memberships which at this time exceeds 334.
- Gene Scott is in charge of the Photo Collection and is working on 1500 negatives, some glass.
- We republish out of print publications and Donna Howell, chairperson of the Book Committee, is responsible for republishing.

- Every year we place plaques on landmarks in the county. Doris Viera, with her faithful committee's help, ensures sites are dedicated and preserved. Doris is also in charge of the historic schoolroom in Auburn's city hall.
- Karri Samson is our Historian and Archivist.
- I invite you to log onto our new website. Barbara Van Riper will gladly answer any of your questions.

I have not included all the committee member volunteers by name or the others in our organization who make our organization such a great Success, but, on behalf of the general membership, I want to thank each one of you for your voluntarism. ♣

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

Addah Owens

When: April 3, 2003

Time: 6:30 pm, Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Veteran's Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn, CA

Cost: \$12.00

Menu: Prime Rib, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Creamed Peas, Salad, Rolls and Dessert

Mail Check to: PCHS, c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Road, Auburn, CA 95603

Program:

Linda Van Gundy, a fifth generation Californian, can trace five branches of her family tree to the California Gold Rush. Her

love of California has been sparked by the 69 daily journals written by her great-great grandfather, James S. Russell. Linda is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the El Dorado County Historical Society, of which she served two years as President. She was a member of the California State Sesquicentennial Exhibit Committee for Sutter's Fort and a docent for Gold Fever-The Lure and Legacy of the California Gold Rush traveling exhibit. In addition, she has taught sessions for Elderhostel programs studying genealogy and California history, as well as, made numerous oral presentations to various clubs and associations.

The story of James Russell is of a nineteen-year-old who heard of the discovery of gold in California and sailed 183 days to reach the "golden land." Living to be one hundred years old, he panned, rocked and sluiced for gold while engaging in the social life and obligations of an early day California settler. The miner's story is told through his daily journal entries, letters and newspaper accounts of the events in which he participated. His story is a step back to see life as the forty-niners lived it. ♦

New Members Welcomed *Barbara Burdick*

The Placer County Historical Society would like to welcome the following new members:

Bill & Kay Muselin, Auburn
Brian Lee Morris, Auburn ♥

Placer County Historical Organizations

Roseville Historical Society
Dean Moore, (916) 773-3003
557 Lincoln St.
Roseville, CA 95678
www.rosevillehistorical.org

Forest Hill Divide Historical
Society
Gerda Percival, 367-2366
PO Box 646
Foresthill, CA 95631-0646
www.foresthillhistory.org

Lincoln Highway Association
Mary Salazar, (530) 367-2747
PO Box 492
Foresthill, CA 95631
www.lincolnhighwayassoc.com

Golden Drift Historical Society
Doug Ferrier, (530) 389-2617
PO Box 20
Dutch Flat, CA 95714-0020

Placer County Genealogical
Society
Joyce House, (530) 887-2646
PO Box 7385
Auburn, CA 95604
www.pcgenes.com

Colfax Area Historical Society
Helen Wayland, (530) 346-7040
PO Box 185
Colfax, CA 95713-0185
www.foothill.net/colfax/history

Maidu Interpretive Center
Kristie Stevens Bungard,
(916) 772-4242
1960 Johnson Ranch Drive
Roseville, CA 95661
www.micf.net

Placer County Historical Society
George Lay, (530) 878-1927
PO Box 5643
Auburn, CA 95604
www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Rocklin Historical Society
Gay Morgan (916) 624-2355
PO Box 752
Rocklin, CA 95677-0752
www.rocklinhistory.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society
Alice Barnes, (916) 652-7844
PO Box 2195
Loomis, CA 95659-2195
www.ppgn.com

Friends of Griffith Quarry
Shirley Patocka, (916) 663-3681
PO Box 326
Penryn, CA 95663-0326

Artifact in the Spotlight

Alycia Alvarez

Surprisingly, our Museum Department has a wonderful collection of typewriters. The highlighted typewriter, a Caligraph New Century, was used by Frank Morris, a writer, when he lived and wrote short stories in Iowa Hill. His volume of stories about his life in Iowa Hill was once at the Berkeley Public Library.

The Caligraph was the first commercial type-bar machine that was sold with a key for each character that it printed. It was put on the market about 1883 and was sold in large numbers. The earlier Caligraph models printed only in upper case, but the later models like the New Century printed in both lower and upper cases.

It was an exceedingly simple machine mechanically and was very durable. George Washington Yost, who had been actively identified with the Remington from the company's inception, organized the Caligraph Patent Company in 1880. The original Caligraph was similar to the early Remington with several refinements of its own. The Caligraph was manufactured in Germany.



Department Intelligence



The Women's Jail

Carmel Barry-Schweyer with help from Bob and Sharon Balmain and Mary Louise O'Neal

Continued from November-December issue:

Notable Prisoners

In August of 1905, Mamie Gardener and Rose Sherwood, both prostitutes, were arrested for attempting to rob a Chinese man of \$15.00. Rose, charged with drunkenness and grand larceny, was only sentenced for ten days. Mamie, sentenced to a year in jail, became the first woman housed in the new women's jail under the courthouse steps that was completed in the fall of 1905.

Alma Bell murdered Joe Armes on June 5, 1909. Both were members of well-known Placer County pioneer families. The *Sacramento Union* and *Placer Herald* printed photos of Alma, the Armes family, the judge and attorneys, crime scene, as well as, the jury. During the trial, articles appeared in every issue.

Alma was one of twelve children of Alexander O. "Pike" Bell of the Rock Creek District. Pike came to Auburn to seek his fortune in 1852 from a farm near Springfield,

Missouri. He began pocket mining in the Rock Creek area and in 1868 hit a rich pocket in the Green Emigrant Mine, taking \$100,000. He returned to Missouri and married Mary who was raised on the farm neighboring the Bell family farm. Bell, 36 years old, and Mary, 23 at the time of their marriage, returned to Auburn and homesteaded near present day Highway 49 and Bell Road.

Alma Bell dated Joe Armes for several years. In fact, Alma worked for Joe's mother and lived in her house. Joe promised to marry Alma and they became intimate. Then one August night he heard rumors of her going out with other men and called off the marriage. Alma became jealous over attention he was giving another young woman, Minnie Foster. Distraught, Alma got her pistol and went to his cabin. They had some discussion about the rumors and her jealousy and he told her that he would not marry her. She asked him to walk her to a friend's house in Newcastle. A short distance from the cabin she shot him through the heart. Sheriff McAuley was called and found the body at 10:30 that night, but they did not find Alma until the next afternoon in the bushes not far from the site of the murder.

Charles A. Tuttle prosecuted the case with the assistance of

George W. Hamilton with L.L. Chamberlain representing Alma Bell. The trial, scheduled to begin the first week of November, was delayed due to difficulty finding unbiased jurors.

During her imprisonment, Alma created needlework that she sold to pay for her attorney. Lace made by Alma, sold at a church fair, brought high prices.

On November 12, after being in the jail since June, Alma appeared pale and listless in court and weary over the long process to secure a jury. That day she told *The Sacramento Union*:

If I am acquitted, and I know I will be, what will I have to live for? At this trial the secrets of my heart, which a girl loves to cherish, will be laid bare to the world. I will be compelled to say things at which the world may point a finger of scorn.

Finally, after interviewing 132 prospective jurors, the trial began on November 16. The cost for securing the jury totaled \$2000.00. On November 24, after the testimony of a total of thirty-six witnesses, and three ballots in an hour and forty-five minutes, Alma Bell was acquitted.

This concludes the Women's Jail Series.♣

Calendar of Events

March

- Mar 17th, 7 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Business Meeting at the Foresthill Divide Museum. Contact (530) 367-2366.
- Mar 17th, 7 pm** Rocklin Historical Society Meeting in the Library Annex Room, Rocklin Library. Contact (916) 624-5404.
- Mar 19th, 7 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting at the Loomis Library. Contact (916) 652-7844.
- Mar 19th, 7 pm** Colfax Historical Society Board Meeting at the Sierra Vista Community Center. Contact (530) 389-2549.

April

- April 10th, 5 pm** Reception for Kinkade Exhibit, Placer County Museum (Courthouse). Contact (916) 889-6500.
- April 16th, 7 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting at the Loomis Library. Contact (916) 652-7844.
- Apr 21st, 7 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Potluck Meeting at the Foresthill Divide Museum. Contact (530) 367-2366.
- Apr 21st, 7 pm** Rocklin Historical Society Meeting in the Library Annex Room, Rocklin Library. Contact (916) 624-5404.
- Apr 24th, 7 pm** Colfax Historical Society General Meeting at the Sierra Vista Community Center. Contact (530) 389-2549.
- Apr 27th,
10 am-3pm** Maidu Interpretive Center hosts Yomen-Maidu Spring Celebration and Craft Fair. Dancers, crafts, children's activities, and tours. Located at 1960 Johnson Ranch Drive, Roseville, CA 9566. Contact (916) 772-4242.